

Cape Henlopen Fact Sheet

Prepared by the office of U.S. Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

As a result of Senator Biden's efforts over the past 20 years,
approximately 1,180 acres of land have been returned to the State of Delaware

- 1975** * Senator Biden works to remove restrictions on Department of Defense lands at Cape Henlopen, which had been previously returned to the State as a result of the efforts of former U.S. Senator J. Caleb Boggs. The restrictions are cleared in 1975 so that the land can be fully utilized as part of the park system. At the same time, Biden initiates an effort to get the Army and Navy to return all of their remaining land.
- 1976** * Senator Biden stops the Navy from using heavy military equipment (LARKS) at Cape Henlopen State Park, which was causing environmental damage to the dunes.
- 1980** * The Army returns half of its land, 94 acres, to the State of Delaware.
- 1982** * The Navy returns 336 acres to the State, with the understanding that it would later relocate a 16 acre Naval Reserve facility to a more remote area and return the land at the existing site to the State.
- 1983** * The Navy conveys the Naval Reserve facility land to the State.
- 1989** * **APRIL:** The Army Corps of Engineers agrees to return 141 acres of land that it controls along the Lewes and Rehoboth Canal, which forms the western border of the park.
- * **NOVEMBER:** Senator Biden attaches an amendment to the fiscal year 1990 Department of Defense authorization bill requiring the Secretary of the Army to report to congressional Armed Services Committees on the feasibility of returning the remaining 96 acres of Army land to the State of Delaware.
- 1990** * **JANUARY:** The Army issues its report conceding the land could be returned, but with extensive conditions that could delay conveyance for years.
- * **FEBRUARY:** Senator Biden initiates negotiations with the Army and State of Delaware to try to secure conveyance of the remaining land without delay.
- 1990** * **MAY:** Senator Biden announces an agreement, and introduces legislation to convey the remaining Army land to the State of Delaware. Under the agreement the State

will reimburse the Army personnel recreation fund \$14,369 for improvements made to the area, and Delaware will allow active-duty military personnel to purchase annual passes to State parks at in-state resident rates, In addition, the land will remain part of the park in perpetuity.

* **NOVEMBER 5:** President Bush signs into law the Biden bill requiring the Army to return the land within one year.

1991 * **OCTOBER 28:** Army representatives officially transfer the deed for its remaining 96 acres to the State of Delaware in a public ceremony at Cape Henlopen State Park.

1993 * **NOVEMBER 30:** 618 acres (including 104 acres of federal surplus land) transferred to State of Delaware in a land swap.

1996 * **JANUARY:** Senator Biden announces an agreement to return the 16.8 acre Naval Reserve Facility at Cape Henlopen State Park to the State of Delaware, which is the only remaining military-controlled land in the park.

* **AUGUST:** Senator Biden and Navy officials decommission the Naval Reserve Facility at a closure ceremony.

* **OCTOBER:** Senator Biden officially turns the deed to the land back to the State of Delaware at a ceremony with Governor Carper.

1998 * **JULY 24:** The Biden Environmental Training Center at Cape Henlopen State Park is officially dedicated.